A Briefe description of Ireland: *Made in this yeare,* 1589.

by Robert Payne, vnto xxv. of his *partners for whome he is vndertaker there.*

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Truely publiſhed verbatim, *according to his letters, by Nich. Gorſtin one* of the ſayd partners, for that he would his countreymen ſhould be partakers of the many good Notes therin contayned.

AT LONDON,
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1589.

To his very good friend M. *Nicholas Gorſan of Trowell in the Countie* of Nottingham, and the reſt of his xxv. partners for Ireland, giue theſe.

LEt not the reportes of thoſe that haue ſpent all their owne and what they could by any meanes get from others in England, diſcourage you from Ireland, although they and ſuch others by bad dealinges haue wrought a generall diſcredite to all Engliſh men, in that countrie which are to the Iriſhe vnknowne. Theſe men will ſay there is great danger in trauelling the countrie, and much more to dwell or inhabite there: yet are they freed from three of the greateſt dangers: firſt, they cannot meete in al that land any woorſe then themſelues: ſecondly, they need not feare robbing for that they haue not any thing to looſe: laſtly, they are not like to run in debt, for that there is none will truſt them. The greateſt matter which troubleth them is, they cannot get any thing there but by honeſt trauell, which they are altogether ignorant of. Theſe men cannot tel what good fruites

fruites England hath, the which Ireland wanteth, neyther can they iustly say, but that it lyeth better for the vent of all commodities then England doth.

¶ What these men haue reported of what the simple haue credited, that would rather beleeue a runnegate then trauell to see: I care not. But what I haue discouered of learned in that countrey, I will herein recite vnto you.

First, the people are of three sortes, the better sort are very ciuill and honestly giuen: the most of them greatly inclined to husbandrie, although as yet vnskilfull, notwithstanding, though their great trauel many of them are rich in cattel, some one man there milketh one hundred kine, and two or three hundred yeawes and goates, and reareth yearely most of their breed.

Their entertainement for your dyet shalbe more welcome and plentifull, then cleanly and handsome, for although they did neuer see you before, they will make you the best cheare their countrey yeeldeth for two or three daies, & take not any thing therefore. Moste of them speake good English and bring vp their children to learning. I sawe in a Grammer schoole in Limberick, one hundred, and threescore schollers, most of them speaking good and perfite English, for y they haue vsed to conster the Latine into English. They keepe their promise faythfully, and are more desirous of peace then our English men, for that in time of warres they are more char-

gen: And also they are latter praies for the enemie who respecteth no person. They are quicke witted and of good constitution of bodie, they reforme themselues dayly more and more after the English manners: nothing is more pleasing vnto them then to heare of good Justices placed amongst thē. They haue a common saying which I am perswaded they speake vnfaynedly, which is, Defend me, & spend me: meaning from the oppression of the worser sort of our countreymen: They are obedient to ỳ lawes, so that you may trauell through all the land without any danger or iniurie offered of ỳ very worst Irish, and be greatly releeued of the best.

The second sort being least in number are called Kernes, they are warlike men: most of that sorte were slayne in the late warres.

The third sort, are a very idle people, not vnlike our English beggers, yet for the most part, of pure complexion and good constitution of body: one of ỳ greatest ouersights in the better sort is, for ỳ they make not that idle sort giue accompt of their life.

They haue the Englishe lawes and gouernours as is in England: First, there is a Lord deputy ouer the whole land, that representeth her Maiestie, also a Lord Chancellor, a Lord Treasurer, a Lord chiefe Justice, and all other Magistrates, Officers and Courtes, in like maner as belongeth to Westminster.

The land is deuided into fiue great parts: that is to

to saye. Munster, Lanster, Conath, Meath, and Vlster. In Munster, are these vii. great countryes: Owrmwood, Deasmond, Corke, Waterford Typerare, Lymbericke, and Carrey: a great part of Munster, was forfited to her Maiestie by meanes of ꝑ Deasmondes late rebellion.

There is two very riche countries called Kennory and Conelogh, both within the countie of Lemerecke: they are called the gardens of the land for ꝑ varietie and great plentie of all graine and fruites, and also there is more plentie of venison, fish and fowle then ell where in Ireland, although in euery place there is great store. This land belonged sometime to the knight of ꝑ valley, who for high treason was executed at Lemerecke. Ouer euery part is an Englishman lieftenant which hath authoritie as fully as the Marshall, to execute Marshall lawes vpon the Irishe offenders at al times. Also there are Judges of assize for euery circuit, who keepe their assises as our Judges doe: if any matter be to be tryed there betweene an English man and an Irish, the Jury is half English and halfe Irish. There is a sheriffe of euery countie, with vndersheriffes, Arrant Bayliffes, & al other officers appertaining. Also there is a conuenient number of Justices of peace in euery countie with Constables and pettie Constables, who keepe their quarter sessions orderly.

The countrey is scituated somewhat neerer the Equinoctiall lyne then England, but yet for that it

lyeth more vpon the Ocean seas & is full of Riuers & smal brookes, it is not so hote in summer as England, neyther is it so cold in winter, for that the seas fretteth away the Ice & Snowe there, much more then in England.

The general Map of Ireland, which is ioyned to the olde Map of England, is moste false: The authour (as it seemeth) drew them both by report, and the common computation of myles: and made his Scale after the English measure, that is one thousand paces, or fiue thousand footes to the myle: but therein he greatly deceiued himselfe, for the shortest myles in England are much longer then that measure, and an Irish myle is longer then two of those myles, by which meanes he hath made the Map of England lesse by ỳ halfe then it should be. Notwithstanding, he hath ouer reached in his nũber of parish Churches, and the Map of Ireland litrll more then one fourth of that it would be, if it were truely drawen. This seemeth strange, and hath deceiued many ignorant in Geometrie: but alwapes take this for a principle, that the square of two myles containeth iust foure tymes so much as the square of one myle, and so of al proportions from the greatest to the least: wherefore as much may be sayd of the long myle which containeth two short myles.

Some mistrust that the Spaniardes will enter the land, & that the Irish wil relieue them: no doubt there are some Papeys in Ireland, I would I could

could truely say there were none in England: but this I dare assure you the greater number, and al the better sort doe deadly hate ỳ Spaniardes, & yet I thinke they beare them fayre weather, for that they are the popes champions, & a great part of the Irish (for want of good preaching & discipline) are greatly inclined to papistrie.

But their intertainemẽt this last yeare amongst ỳ Irish (notwithstãding they brought the popes holy candles & pardons) sheweth how they affect Spãish gouernemẽt. Most of ỳ better sort of ỳ Irish haue read of their mõsterous cruelties in ỳ west Indiãs, where they most tiranously haue murthered many millions moe of those simple creatures thẽ now liueth in Ireland, eũ such as sought their fauours by offering vnto thẽ al ỳ they had, neuer resisting nor offering thẽ any harme. Wherfore I doubt not that ỳ Irish are so foolish to entertain such proud guestes knowing their tyrannie, & hauing not so well deserued at their hands as those simple soules whõ they so cruelly murdered. Neyther are ỳ Spaniardes so vnwise to trust those Irish, who so lately imbrued their hands in their bloud, slaying them as doggs in such plentifull maner, that their garments were about ỳ countrey to be sold, as good cheape as beastes skins. If you haue not the sayd booke of the Spanishe cruelties, I pray you buy it, it is wel worth the reading, I haue forgot the title, but it is of a small volume in quarto: it is written by a learned Bishop of

their owne countrey about foꝛty yeares ſithens in ỹ Caſtalian tooonge, and dedicated to their king foꝛ reformation of thoſe cruelties: afterwardes tranſlated into Engliſh & diuers other languages, to make their monſterous tyꝛannie knowne to the woꝛlde. When you haue read the ſame, commend it to our Catholickes that wil be ſaued by their woꝛkes, and yet will not giue God thankes at their meate, foꝛ that they will not once haue in their mouth ỹ pꝛaier foꝛ our Queene, annexed to our vſual thanks giuing at meate. Iꝑay God open ỹ eies of their vpholders, and let them ſee what theſe men gape foꝛ, which is no doubt the ruine and ouerthꝛow of her highneſſe, whome I pꝛay God pꝛeſerue. But none are ſo blind as they that will not ſe. The Catholikes are borne with foꝛ their conſcience ſake, yet from ſuch conſciences ſpꝛing all the Traiterous pꝛactiſes againſt her Maieſtie.

Although ſome of ſmal iudgements (which thinke euery ſoile good that beareth long graſſe) haue fayled of their expected woad crops, by meanes of their vn ſkilfull choyſe of ground, yet aſſuredly the commodities of the countrie are many moe then eyther the people can well vſe oꝛ I recite. Their ſoyle foꝛ the moſt part is very fertile, and apt foꝛ Wheate, Rye, Barly, Peaſon, Beanes, Oates, Woade, Madder, Rape, Hoppes, Hempe, Flaxe and al other graines and fruites ỹ England any wiſe doth yeeld. There is much good timber in many places & of ỹ ſtraightneſſe

nesse and so good to reaue, that a simple workeman with a Brak axe wil cleaue a great Oke, to boards of lesse then one ynche thicke, xiiii. ynches broad and xv. fooces in length, such a board there is vsually sold for ii.d.ob. There is very riche and great plentie of Iron stone, and one sort more then we haue in England, which they call Bogge myne, of the which a Smith there wil make at his forge Iron presently. Also there is great store of Lead Ore, & Wood sufficient to mayntayne diuers Iron and lead workes (with good husbandrie) for euer. A barrel of Wheat or a barrell of bay Salt containing three bushels & a halfe of Winchester measure, is sold there for iiii. s. Salt, Pease, Beanes, for ii.s.viii.d. Barly for ii. s.viii.d. Dates for xx.d. a fresh Sämō worth in London x.s. for vi.d.xviii. Herrings or vi. Makerels, vi. sea breames, a fat hen, xxc. Egges, a fat Pigge, one pound of Butter, or ii. gallōs of new Milke for a penny. A reede Deare without the skinne, for ii.s.vi.d. A fat Beefe for xiii.s.iiii.d. A fat Mattō for xviii.d.

There be great store of wild Swannes, Cranes, Pheasantes, Partriges, Heathcocks, Plouers green & gray, Curlewes Woodcockes, Rayles, Quailes, & al other fowles much more plentiful then in England. You may buy a dosen of Quayles for iii.d. a dosen of Woodcocks for iiii. d. & all other fowls ratable. Oysters, muskels, cockles and Samphiere about ỳ sea coastes are to be had for gathering great plentie: the Phisitions there hold, ỳ Samphier is a

i.e. about ỹ 1st Quarter.

present

prefent remedie agaynſt the ſtone: you may buy the beſt Heafers there with Calues at their feet, for xx. s. a peece, the which are nothing inferiour to the better ſorte of Lyncolnſhire breed. Their chiefe horſſes are of as great price as in England, but carthorſſes mares, and little hackneyes are of very ſmall price, the meaneſt Iriſh man diſdayneth to ryde on a mare. You may keepe a better houſe in Ireland for L. li. a yeare, then in England for C C. li a yeare. All your commodities you may tranſport from ỳ ſea ſide in ỳ countie of Corke (where I haue prouided for eache of vs foure hundred Acres of land) to England for viii. d. ỳ hundred waight, ſo that you make the ſame ready about S. Andrewes tide, when the herring fiſhers gee home from Irelãd. The charg of which carriage for ſo much as you barrell, you may ſaue a great part through Cheapenes of the caſke, & then wil ỳ moſt of your cõmodities, viz. Butter, Cheeſe, Bacon, Beefe, Honny, Ware, Tallowe, Corne, and Herring with diuers other Marchandize bee readie for the market.

The woorſſer ſorte of vndertakers which haue ſeignories of her Maieſtie, haue done much hurt in the countrie, and diſcouraged many from ỳ voyage: for they haue entyced many honeſt men ouer, promiſſing them much and performing nothing, no not ſo much as to paie their ſeruantes, & workmen wages. They wil not let any terme, aboue xxi. yeres or three liues, and ỳ demaund for rent xii. d. ỳ Acre: this is ſo farre

from

from the meaning of her Maiestie, as appeareth by her highnes graūt, ỹ as I think they haue, or shortly will make all their estates voyde. They finde such profite from the Irishe tenantes, who giue thē the fourth sheafe of al their corne, and vi.d. yearely for a beastes gralle, besides diuers other Irish accustomed duties. So that they care not although they neuer place any English man there. But ỹ better sort of vnder takers being many good knights & gentlemen of great worshipp, do seek by al meanes possible to plant their landes with Englishmen according to ỹ meaning of her Maiesties graunt: they offer to any man either three hundreth acres of land in fee-farme or foure hundred acres by leale for one hundred yeares, for vi.d. the acre without any fine.

Sir Richard Greenefield taketh a verie good order for artificers & labourers: he will let any poore man of honest behauioura house, xl. acres of land & vi. milche Kyne for xl.s. the yeare, for the terme of three liues, and if any of these men after they haue bread on the same stocken sufficient number of cattell to store their ground, doe deliuer their stocke agayne, then shal they pay but xx.s. rent for the rest of their termes. And if any of the said Kine be stolne, and the owner doe track which way they were driuen from his ground, the sayd sir Richard will deliuer him so many Kyne for them, for that the law is there, if you tracke any stolne goodes into any mans land, hee must tracke them from him, or answere

them

them within xl.daies, so where the track ceaseth, the goodes must be answered.

A man may be aswell and cleanely tabled at an English house in Ireland for the profit of fiue Kyne and fiftie sheepe, all which will be bought for vii.li. x.s. & for ỹ rent of so much land as wil keep them, which is xx.s. the yeare, as at the best ordinarie in England for v.d. a meale: all which amounteth but to xxxv.s.vi.d. a yeare, accounting ii.s. in the pound for interest of the stocke. Whom may be bowed for the pryce of foure Kyne, xl. sheepe, and xvi. s. rent. Seruants for iii. Kyne. xxx. sheepe, and xii. s. rent. Children, for ii. kine, xx. sheepe and viii.s. rent. Thus may a man that is xii. in houshold, viz. Himselfe, his wife, ii. seruauntes, and viii. children be very wel tabled a yeare for the profite of xxvi. Kyne, iii. C. and x. sheep, & vi.li.x.s. rent: al which stocke wil be bought for lesse then lx.li. The vse wherof being v.li. the whole charge of a yeare for xii. persons is xii.li.x.s. which is xx.s. x.d. a peece. This hath not bene long vsed there, but nowe ỹ Englishman thinketh himselfe happie that can make such a bargayne with an honest man: for although ỹ which is not euery way to the gesse aboue xii.li.x.s. may make the host with good husbandrie more then a hundred markes.

One hundred pounds wil buy lx. milch kine, CCC. yeawes, xx. swyne, and a good teame: the ground to keep these cattell, & vse this trade on, wil be CCCC. acres at x. pound rent so your yearely charg will be

with

with interest of your mony, rr.li. for the which you may haue yeerely vpon good security with warrant of your stocke, rl. firkins of butter, and fortie great ways of cheese, of the milke gathered betwixt May, and Michaelmas, which at r.s. the firkin, and rrv. s. the waie, is threescore & ten pounds, and the wooll and lamb of your sheepe, cannot be so litle worth as rrr.li. a yeare, all which amounteth to one hundred pounds: so may you declare besides your interest and rent, eightie pounds a yeere.

To husband this farme, your tenant must keepe viii. persons, which may be well done with the profite of the swyne, wynter milke, calues and the crop which he should get vpon your land vp your teame.

Most of the coyne in Ireland, and that which the people generally desire there, is base mony made of copper or brasse, they will not change you an angell into that money without iiii.d. gaines: I would to God her Maiestie would coyne foure hundred thousand markes of the same, and lend it to the English marchantes gratis for two yeares, to be imployed there in mather, woade, rape, hoppes, hempe, flaxe and such other cõmodities, as might set some great number of our English men to worke: by which meanes (in my iudgement) ỳ land might be very wel peopled, her Maiestie disburthened of a great part of her charge there, the marchantes made great gayners, and yet at the two yeares end paie her Maiestie her full summe in currant English money for that base

mettell

mettell, whereby her Maiestie might gayne at least CC. thousand poundes without hurt to any, & good to many thousandes. I haue sent you heerein closed an instructiō how you shal make a warraine for conies of two acres of ground, y shalbe sufficient for a gentlemans house in which warraine, you may also make an Orchard, and the conies shall not barke your trees, nor make their berries vnder the rootes, neither shal the sayd conies go foorth of two acres. Thus with my heartie commendations, I bid you heartily farewell. From my house at Paynes end, this xxv. of June. 1589.

Your louing friend Robert Payne.

The copie of an instruction for a *Warraine.*

FIrst, you must choose twoacres of very drie ground, and compasse it with a ditch as round as a circle, fiue footes deepe and seuen footes wide, let the slope side of your ditch be towardes your warraine, and that wayes throw vp all your earth, let the outside be plum vpright, which you must presently payle, otherwise the earth wil fal in: then plant your trees not aboue viii. ynches deep, and at the least xxiiii foote asunder, lay at euery roote close about the tree, asmuch pease strawe as a man will carry vnder his arme, the which will keepe the roote moyst in sommer, & warme from frostes in winter. The best time to set your trees is shortly after Michaelmas: which verefieth an old prouerbe in Kent if thou wilt a

good

good tree haue, let him carry a greene leafe to his graue. In the very middeſt of your groũd you muſt make a little lodge, in the which you muſt haue eight ſeueral hutches, ſo placed that they may be alwayes open into the warraine, in euery hutche you muſt tye with a little chayne a tame bucke conny of the beſt kynde: then ſtore your warraine with 64. of the better ſort of tame female connies, which is for euery bucke viii. does, euery weeke the firſt quarter: & then monthly you muſt waſh your trees with water, ſo high as a conny can reache wherein you muſt burſt the garbadg of a conny. Alſo euery weeke you muſt draw a peece of carraine at the foote of your payle in the bottome of your ditche round about your warraine, by which meanes your conies will neuer offer to touche your trees, nor come neere the payle to ſcrap thẽſelues out. You muſt feede your connies with the ſhorteſt and ſweeteſt haye you can get: you may giue thẽ graſſe, mallowes, colewortes ſow thiſtles, the, tops of carrats, ſcarrates, and any yearbs or weeds, they wil eate foure dayes in a weeke in ſommer, and two dayes in winter, but not aboue for feare of the rotte: yet let thẽ haue haie enough at al times, you may fatte them with graines mixed with oates, bran, or French wheate: you muſt giue your cõnies euery day one oate ſheafe, which will alwayes keep them hearty, ſound, & fayre skinned. I doe accompt your charges in keeping your cõnies to be xx. markes a yeare, that is your warrainers board and wages, viii. li. and the conies meate v. li. vi. s. viii. d. the increaſe at an indifferent reckoning, wil be ſeuen litters a yeare; euery conie of the beſt

kinde

kynde will bring vi. Rabbits at a litter, where one of that ſort bringeth fewer, two will bring moe, ſome will bring ix. litters in ayeare; & that doe is not worth the keeping, that bringeth not vii litters a yeare. The value of this increaſe after the foreſayd rates, and at viii. d. the couple, (which̄ very ſkinnes with good huſbandrie of moſt of them wil be worth,) amounteth vnto the ſum of xliiii. li. xvi. s. a yeare. But for feare you ſhould fayle in your reckoning, as the womā did that ſuppoſed al the egges in her baſket were capons: I would haue you allow for caſualties, xi. li. ix. s. iiii. d. ſo reſteth aboue all charges of the warrainer, and their meate, xx. li. by yeare declaro, which I thinke being wel vſed can yeeld no leſſe: although this kinde being bred in houſes do not eate ſweet, yet being bred after this manner, they are both the biggeſt, fatteſt, and ſweeteſt conies that are.

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